



PRESS RELEASE

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Expanded Exam Option for Teachers

SACRAMENTO – Teachers will soon have a new option for assessing their basic skills, as a result of recent action taken by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (Commission) at its June 5, 2008 meeting. The Commission approved the development of a computer-based version of the California Basic Education Skills Test (CBEST), an exam that measures a teacher's proficiency in basic reading, writing and mathematics. A two-year pilot project has been developed, during which CBEST test takers will be offered the option of either a computer-based format or the standard paper-based format. Information from the pilot will help to determine the interest in and use by examinees of a computer-based testing option and how to implement the option to best serve credential candidates.

Currently, the paper-based CBEST is offered six times per year, one day every other month, at numerous sites throughout California. Under the pilot project, starting in November the computer-based CBEST will be available at least 72 times per year: every month it will be offered during a one week window, Thursday through Wednesday, excluding Sunday, with up to three sessions per day. The computer-based tests will be administered at Pearson VUE testing centers across California, in Anaheim, Fresno, Gardena, Oakland, Ontario, Pasadena, Redding, Roseville, San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose, Santa Maria, and Westlake Village. Because of the limited number of CBEST test items currently available, individuals cannot retake the computer-based CBEST for 120 days but may retake it in the paper-based format during that period. The design of the test forms for both the paper-based and computer-based CBEST versions will be as similar as possible so both sets of examinees will have a similar testing experience.

The CBEST was administered to over 80,000 candidates during the 2006-2007 testing year. Under the pilot project, the computer-based CBEST will be offered during the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 testing years, with the initial administration in November 2008. During the pilot project, the paper-based version of the CBEST will continue to be administered according to its regular administration schedule.

The official scoring of the proposed computer-based CBEST will be done in the same manner as for the paper-based. It is anticipated that the examinees will be given an unofficial indication of their reading and mathematics results immediately following the

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testing session. The paper-based CBEST scores are mailed approximately nineteen days after the test administration. Official results for the computer-based CBEST will be mailed to examinees ten days after the last test day (Wednesday) of the testing window.

Test takers who opt for the convenience of taking the computer-based CBEST exam will pay a bit more. The fee for the computer-based exam option is \$105. The additional cost covers such benefits as the increased opportunities to take the CBEST, the more flexible administration schedule, the ease of using state of the art computers, a more conducive, state of the art testing environment, and the smaller proctor to examinee ratio. The examinee cost for the paper-based CBEST administration will remain unchanged at \$41.

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